

In the Year 2002: WSU, World, Culturally

In 2002, Weber State University (WSU) was a focal point of global attention due to the Winter Olympics, while simultaneously undergoing a major internal transformation in leadership and campus design. [source]

The 2002 Winter Olympics

The XIX Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City brought the world to WSU's doorstep.

- **The Ogden Ice Sheet:** This on-campus venue hosted all Olympic curling events. To accommodate the influx of international athletes and spectators, the university took a two-week "Olympic Break" in February. [source]
- **Student Life Pivot:** Students living on campus were required to temporarily move out of their dorms so the facilities could house media members and Olympic officials. Many students volunteered for the Games or stayed with local families during the transition. [source]

A Historic Shift in Leadership

2002 marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new one for university administration.

- **First Female President:** F. Ann Millner was inaugurated as WSU's 11th president and its first female leader. [source]
- **Campus Renewal:** Millner launched a massive "rejuvenation" of the Ogden campus. This included the redesign of the Stewart Bell Tower Plaza and the replacement of older buildings with newer facilities like Elizabeth Hall. [source]
- **Kimball Visual Arts Center:** The Ethel Wattis Kimball Visual Arts Center was dedicated in May 2002. Notably, it was the first building in university history funded entirely by private donations. [source]

Student Culture & Events

- **9/11 Vigil:** On the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in 2002, students held a solemn candlelight vigil at the campus duck pond. [source]
- **The "Nugal Lan Party":** Demonstrating the tech culture of the early 2000s, students gathered for organized "LAN parties" in the Shepherd Union's Lair to play computer games. [source]
- **Social Trends:** WSU records from 2002 show the popularity of campus-wide speed-dating events. [source]

Athletic Highlights

- **Tennis Rivalry:** In early 2002, the WSU women's tennis team faced off against the University of Utah in a high-stakes duel, with standouts like Therina Steenkamp and Dana DeLancey securing doubles victories for the Wildcats. [source]
- **Men's Basketball:** The 2002–03 season (which began in late 2002) became one of WSU's most legendary, as the team went undefeated in the Big Sky Conference under coach Joe Cravens. [source]

2002: A New World Order

- **The Euro:** The Euro officially entered circulation in 12 European Union countries, replacing legacy currencies such as the Franc and the Deutschmark.
- **Homeland Security:** The U.S. Department of Homeland Security was established in response to the 9/11 attacks.

The Winter Olympics: Salt Lake City hosted the XIX Winter Games, which featured the debut of the "Skeleton" event and was the first Games held under heightened post-9/11 security.

2002: The Rise of the Idols

- **Music:** The first season of *American Idol* premiered, making Kelly Clarkson a household name. In hip-hop, Eminem released *The Eminem Show* and the film *8 Mile*.
- **Film:** *Spider-Man* (the Tobey Maguire version) shattered box-office records, ushering in the modern era of superhero dominance.

Gaming: The Xbox Live service launched, forever changing how people played video games together online.